

For Immediate Release

Contact: Erica Daughtrey

June 15, 2010

201-222-2828

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*Washington, D.C.*-- Congressmen Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Albio Sires (D-NJ), and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), along with Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), today commented on a letter sent to Congressman Collin Peterson (D-MN) by 256 Cuban former political prisoners who suffered a combined 3,551 years as political prisoners in the Castros' gulags. The letter by the former political prisoners was in reaction to comments made by Rep. Peterson last week when he declared that, "...people who oppose [H.R. 4645] are not speaking on behalf of the Cuban people, regardless of what they say."

"No one has more moral authority to speak regarding the Cuban tragedy than Cuban political prisoners and former political prisoners. This letter by 256 former Cuban political prisoners is extremely powerful and must be listened to," commented Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

"Some of my colleagues believe that enhancing trade and doing away with regulations with the dictatorial regime in Cuba will somehow improve the lot of the Cuban people. The world has been trading with Cuba for the last half a century and what benefits has this brought to the Cuban people? None. On the contrary, Cubans have endured more oppression and repression at every level of society, from preschool to the workplace.

Enhanced US trade to Cuba will only add to the coffers of a regime that does everything within its grasp to take away every right from the Cuban people. The letter of these brave former political prisoners should bring some common sense to those who put profit over freedom," declared Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

"These former political prisoners experienced the cruelty of the Castro regime for decades, and they understand how increased resources can and will be used to repress civil society in Cuba," said Congressman Sires. "Their voices must be respected and heard."

"The signatories of this letter to Rep. Peterson not only represent the suffering of the Cuban people, they are also the embodiment of the struggle for Cuba's freedom," remarked Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart.

Below, please find the text of letter sent to Congressman Peterson today along with the list of signatories, including number of years as political prisoners:

June 15, 2010

Chairman Collin Peterson

Committee on Agriculture

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Peterson:

We are former Cuban political prisoners who have spent a combined 3,551 years in Castro's gulag. We are living testimony of the unspeakable tortures, cruelty and deprivations of the military dictatorship of the Castro brothers.

You recently released a statement concerning H.R. 4645 claiming that, "...people who oppose this bill are not speaking on behalf of the Cuban people, regardless of what they say." Not only

is your statement untrue, but also profoundly insulting to us. We are a community that is comprised of victims of the Castro dictatorship. Mr. Peterson, we *are* "Cuban people" and we wholeheartedly oppose your bill.

Your statement is all the more offensive when you take into account that the Cuban-American community has four Members that we elect to the U.S. House of Representatives and all four oppose your legislation as well. How dare you profess to know more about the Cuban people, or our plight, than the Members who are elected by us and the family members of Cubans from the island? You have every right to try to advance your agricultural agenda. However, you are not entitled to question our community, which is full of Castro's victims -- who have suffered brutality that you could not even fathom -- and whose relatives on the island continue to be the victims of that dictatorship's daily repression.

You have consistently demonstrated a lack of sensitivity to the suffering of our people and an apparent lack of awareness regarding the important leverage that U.S. sanctions represents to our struggle for Cuba's freedom. You recently stated, "None of us support the Cuban Government's detainment of political prisoners. However, these policies we have in place today have done nothing to remove the regime or to improve the situation for political prisoners." Nonetheless, you have never taken the time to meet with any of us, nor have you ever invited us to testify before your committee. If you had, you would not be able to ignore the fact that every dollar your legislation seeks to place in the coffers of the Castro regime will only be used to further repress the Cuban people. Should this legislation pass, Mr. Peterson, we trust that you will be prepared to assume the responsibility for the increased bloodshed it will cause the people of Cuba.

Mr. Peterson, you owe us, our community and our elected Representatives an immediate apology for your offensive statement. Though you may disagree with our views, we hope you will not continue to impugn us for our suffering, deeply held beliefs and tragic experiences.

Sincerely,

Ignacio Cuesta Valle

29 years in prison

Antonio López Muñoz

28 years in prison

Dasio René Hernández Peña

28 years in prison

Dr. Alberto Fibla

28 years in prison

Pastor Macurán

28 years in prison

Roberto Martin Perez

28 years in prison

Roberto Perdomo

28 years in prison

Teodoro González

28 years in prison

Jose L. Pujals

27 years in prison

Miguel A. Alvarez Cardentey

27 years in prison

Aldo Chaviano

26 years in prison

Eleno Oviedo

26 years in prison

Pablo Prieto

26 years in prison

Ramón Méndez Pimentel

26 years in prison

Ramon Conte

26 years in prison

Víctor M. Cantón

26 years in prison

Alberto Grau

25 years in prison

Angel L. Arguelles

25 years in prison

Felipe Alonso

25 years in prison

Orlando R. Molina

25 years in prison



Oswaldo Figueroa

25 years in prison

Ricardo Montero Duque

25 years in prison

Angel Pardo Mazorra

24 years in prison

Ramón San Roman

24 years in prison

Reinaldo Figueroa

24 years in prison

Alberto Jané

23 years in prison

Armando Yong

23 years in prison

Oscar Rodríguez Terrero

23 years in prison

Reinaldo López Lima

23 years in prison

Armando Valladares

22 years in prison

Basilio Guzmán

22 years in prison

Carlos Pons

22 years in prison

Efraín Llerena

22 years in prison

Ernesto Díaz

22 years in prison

Eugenio Silva

22 years in prison

José A. Lamas

22 years in prison

Silvino Rodríguez Barrientos

22 years in prison

Abel Nieves

21 years in prison

Bruno Salas

21 years in prison

J. René Ramos

21 years in prison

José J. Santana

21 years in prison

Roberto Ascue

21 years in prison

Adalberto Sánchez Zamora

20 years in prison

Alfredo Mustelier Nuevo

20 years in prison

Angel De Fana

20 years in prison

Geovani Perera

20 years in prison

Huber Matos

20 years in prison

Jaime Costa

20 years in prison

Julio R. Sosa

20 years in prison

Lázaro Guerra

20 years in prison

Olvido Praderas Montero

20 years in prison

Roger Reyes

20 years in prison

Ana Lazara Rodriguez

19 years in prison

Angel Alfonso Alemán

19 years in prison

Edelmiro Delgado

19 years in prison

Eduardo de Juan Machado

19 years in prison

Ereido Cruz

19 years in prison

Gustavo Gallardo

19 years in prison

José M. Del Pino

19 years in prison

Luis Zúñiga

19 years in prison

Marcelo Morgado

19 years in prison

Raimundo J. Solís

19 years in prison



Alejandro Moreno

18 years in prison

Aurelio Candelaria

18 years in prison

Daniel Gómez

18 years in prison

Eddie Artze

18 years in prison

Eduardo Piedra

18 years in prison

Humberto Hernández

18 years in prison

Joaquín Chanying

18 years in prison

José F. Pérez Sánchez

18 years in prison

Juan Prieto

18 years in prison

Martín Hernández

18 years in prison

Miriam Ortega

18 years in prison

Rafael Rodríguez

18 years in prison

Raúl Pérez Coloma

18 years in prison

Roberto Gesni

18 years in prison

Rubén Gonzalo García

18 years in prison

Servando Infante

18 years in prison

Arsenio Parodi

17 years in prison

Fidelina Fernández

17 years in prison

Georgina Cid

17 years in prison

José A. Núñez

17 years in prison

Mario E. Atía

17 years in prison

Orlando Castro

17 years in prison

René Cruz

17 years in prison

Roberto Jiménez

17 years in prison

Roberto Rivero Gómez

17 years in prison

Angel Lucena

16 years in prison

Antonio García Rivero

16 years in prison

Caridad Roque

16 years in prison

Evaristo Sotolongo

16 years in prison

Francisco Javier Denis

16 years in prison

Jesús Rodríguez Beruvides

16 years in prison

José Carreño

16 years in prison

Luis González Infante

16 years in prison

Manuel Barba

16 years in prison

Mario Fajardo

16 years in prison

Mercedes Peña

16 years in prison

Pedro Fuentes Cid

16 years in prison

Raúl García

16 years in prison

Agustín Robaina

15 years in prison

Alberto Montes

15 years in prison

Angel Cuadra

15 years in prison

Angel M. García



15 years in prison

Arelis Rodríguez San Román

15 years in prison

Carlos Calvo

15 years in prison

Delio Blanco

15 years in prison

Edel Ravelo

15 years in prison

Francisco Cruz

15 years in prison

Gerardo Rodríguez San Román

15 years in prison

José Chirino

15 years in prison

Juan Ramón Díaz

15 years in prison

Luis J. Chirino

15 years in prison

Mario Cruz Martínez

15 years in prison

Nin Amaro

15 years in prison

Orlando Martínez Paz

15 years in prison

Ramón González

15 years in prison

Ramon "Rino" Puig

15 years in prison

Raúl Arteaga

15 years in prison

Rodolfo Rodríguez San Román

15 years in prison

Rudesindo Rodríguez Blanco

15 years in prison

Tebelio Rodríguez San Román

15 years in prison

Teresa Bastanzuri

15 years in prison

Enrique Cepero

14 years in prison

Elio Cuencio

14 years in prison

Germán González

14 years in prison

Jorge Dulzaides

14 years in prison

Omelio Rodríguez

14 years in prison

Angel Reyes

13 years in prison

Arbelio Marin

13 years in prison

Bernardo Ricardo

13 years in prison

Eduardo J. Cano

13 years in prison

Eleuterio Martínez

13 years in prison

Heriberto Castillo

13 years in prison

Jorge Guzmán Chaple

13 years in prison

Alicia de Busto

12 years in prison

Angel García

12 years in prison

Aniceto Cuesta

12 years in prison

Celedonio Invierno

12 years in prison

Feliciano Mohamed

12 years in prison

Jorge Luis Delgado

12 years in prison

Jorge Valdez Paez

12 years in prison

Jorge Portuondo Jorge

12 years in prison

José A. Jiménez

12 years in prison

José A. Lima

12 years in prison



Juan Besu

12 years in prison

Jose Luis Gallareta

12 years in prison

Juan Casas

12 years in prison

Juan Valdés de Armas

12 years in prison

Juan Medina Plata

12 years in prison

Medardo M. Salcedo

12 years in prison

Pablo Castro

12 years in prison

Rafael Marques

12 years in prison

Reinaldo Aquit

12 years in prison

Jesús González Martínez

11 years in prison

Edgardo Llompar

11 years in prison

Alberto Abreu

10 years in prison

Armando Loo

10 years in prison

Aurelio Vázquez

10 years in prison

Candelario L. Puentes

10 years in prison

Emilio González

10 years in prison

Enrique Pérez García

10 years in prison

Enrique Ruano

10 years in prison

Hector Sanchez

10 years in prison

Fermín Amador Chamizo

10 years in prison

Fernando Arias

10 years in prison

Fr. Miguel Angel Loredó, OFM

10 years in prison

Frank Perez

10 years in prison

Gladys Ruisánchez

10 years in prison

Gloria Argudín

10 years in prison

Guillermo Rodríguez

10 years in prison

Idalberto Sánchez Vidal

10 years in prison

Irma Ferneandez Llorca`

10 years in prison

Jesús Pérez

10 years in prison

Jose A. Gutierrez-Solana

10 years in prison

Jose Bello

10 years in prison

Julio Cepero

10 years in prison

Lionel Rodriguez

10 years in prison

Manuel Amaro

10 years in prison

Manuel Jiménez

10 years in prison

Mariano Rodríguez

10 years in prison

Mireya Muro Morales

10 years in prison

Nelson Rodríguez

10 years in prison

Oneida Fernández

10 years in prison

Pedro Juan López Díaz

10 years in prison

Raul Martinez

10 years in prison



Regino García

10 years in prison

Renan Yanes

10 years in prison

Ramon Couto

10 years in prison

Rene Piedra

10 years in prison

Reinaldo Morales

10 years in prison

Roberto Gessne

10 years in prison

Rodolfo Masó

10 years in prison

Sigfredo López

10 years in prison

Teresa Pérez Pous

10 years in prison

Tony Artilles

10 years in prison

Vicente Gener

10 years in prison

Víctor M. Hernández

10 years in prison

Virgilio Morera

10 years in prison

Arturo Estevez

9 years in prison

Berta Cantón

9 years in prison

Casimiro Lopez Periu

9 years in prison

Domingo Martínez

9 years in prison

Efraín Taquechel

9 years in prison

Elías Gonzalo García

9 years in prison

Eugenio Llamera

9 years in prison

Gabriel Aztengo

9 years in prison

Gerardo Rodriguez Capote

9 years in prison

Gregorio Ariosa

9 years in prison

Jorge Fernández Rodríguez

9 years in prison

José R. Toledo

9 years in prison

Luis Masón

9 years in prison

Marcos González

9 years in prison

María Elena Pujol

9 years in prison

Miguel Hernández Falero

9 years in prison

Nelly Rojas

9 years in prison

Orlando Lopez Periu

9 years in prison

Raúl Martínez

9 years in prison

Tomás Benito Paz

9 years in prison

Adolfo González García

8 years in prison

Juan Alborna Saldo

9 years in prison

Enrique Ruano

8 years in prison

Pedro Corzo

8 years in prison

Servando Mesa

8 years in prison

Angel Nicasio Bueno

7 years in prison

Elías Gonzalo

7 years in prison

Hernán Reyes

7 years in prison

Alfredo Garcia Menocal

6 years in prison



Jorge Cruz

6 years in prison

Elba González

6 years in prison

Elda Torres

6 years in prison

Emelina Nuñez

6 years in prison

Ildefonso Pérez

6 years in prison

Ino Martell Casuso

6 years in prison

José Luis Fernández

6 years in prison

Ana María Rojas

5 years in prison

Carmelo Zamora

5 years in prison

Carmen Voloso

5 years in prison

Dionisio Gonzalo López

5 years in prison

Dr. Tomás Barrios

5 years in prison

Eduardo "Eddy" Arango

5 years in prison

José Albertini

5 years in prison

Maritza Lugo

5 years in prison

Miguel Tatte

5 years in prison

Roberto Ruiz

5 years in prison

Agustín de Jesús Lastre Barroso

4 years in prison

Carmen Arias

4 years in prison

Emiliano Reinoso

4 years in prison

Ignacio R. Barrios

4 years in prison

Juan Hernández Pujol

4 years in prison

Gladys Campanería

3 years in prison

Ileana Curra

3 years in prison

Pedro Morales

3 years in prison

Alvin Ross

2 years in prison

Sergio Llanes

2 years in prison

Vicente Echerri

2 years in prison

cc: The Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

The Hon. Lincoln Diaz-Balart

The Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart

The Hon. Albio Sires

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